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THE GULL

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE GOLDEN GATE AUDUBON SOCIETY



Bob Lewis/www.wingbeats.org

Researchers with Audubon California have determined that the Yellow-billed Magpie could lose as much as 75 percent of its range in the next 100 years due to climate change, possibly driving it to extinction.

Starting to Help Bay Area Birds at Home

According to the National Audubon Society, up to 110 of 310 of California's native bird species will suffer significant reductions in their habitat ranges due to climate change in the coming decades. Indeed, climate change is already affecting bird species around the world. If we want to reduce these impacts and help build bigger, more resilient bird populations, we need to act collectively now.

In honor of Earth Day this month, we are proposing five steps for conserving energy, reducing waste, and enhancing bird populations. If we all take these simple steps, and perhaps encourage our friends and families to do the same, together we can make a significant contribution to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and providing safe, productive habitat for birds. We encourage you to take the spirit of Earth Day and apply it in actions every day throughout the year.

STEP 1: ENERGY CONSERVATION STARTS AT HOME

Conserving energy reduces our need for energy generation that creates pollution and greenhouse gases that contribute to climate change. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency recommends that each household replace at least five traditional lightbulbs with long-lasting, energy-efficient fixtures like compact fluorescent bulbs.

HELP BIRDS continued on page 12

Register for the 2010 Birdathon

Picture this: Six enthusiastic birders pile out of a van. They walk quietly to the area where the male Rose-breasted Grosbeak was last seen. Yesterday morning, this crew was up at the Sacramento Delta. Today, 60 miles later, they're in the San Francisco Presidio. They haven't slept. They're exhausted. But they're having the time of their lives. At first, no luck. Then, off to the left, they spot movement. A good sized passerine. Got it. The grosbeak emerges. High fives. The group has just found their 100th species in 24 hours.

This is one of the many scenarios that birders around the Bay Area may experience when they take part in the 2010 Golden Gate Audubon Birdathon—our biggest fundraising event of the year, from April 17 through May 16. For the first time in nearly two decades, GGA is hosting this event that brings us together to support our conservation and education work on behalf of Bay Area birds.

How does it work? A birdathon is like a walkathon, except that you count bird species instead of miles. Friends, family members, and coworkers support you by pledging any amount, from dimes to dollars, for each species you identify. Participation in the event automatically enters you into contests for a chance to win fabulous prizes at the Golden Gate Audubon Birdathon celebratory banquet on June 2.

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The Golden Gate Audubon Society was founded January 25, 1917, and became a chapter of National Audubon in 1948. Golden Gate Audubon Supporting Membership is \$35 per year. Renewals should be sent to the Golden Gate Audubon office. The board of directors meets six times per year (schedule can be obtained from the main office).

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Nature Store hours: Monday – Friday, 10 – 5

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BIRDATHON continued from page 1

At the banquet, we will award prizes in categories including:

- Highest species count in a 24- or 48-hour period
- Most money raised
- Highest species count by a birder age 16 or younger
- Highest species count by a birder 65 or older
- Most species counted from a single backyard
- Best Bird (determined by a panel of expert judges)

Why did we choose to organize the Birdathon? For two reasons. It's an enjoyable and effective way to raise the funds needed for maintaining and expanding our vital programs, and identifying and counting local birds are what our members (like you) do best. Simply stated, Golden Gate Audubon members love to get out and bird.

So, why should you participate? I'm sure some will join the Birdathon for the fun of getting outdoors with your friends and adding to your life list. You can form a team or join a field trip where our trip leaders will be glad to help you find the most birds (see Field Trips, page 7). Those with limited time or mobility can enjoy looking out their window and counting the birds in their backyard. Still others won't be able to resist the urge to compete for the prizes awarded for seeing the most birds, identifying the best bird, or raising the most money.

Whatever your motivation, you will have the satisfaction of knowing that your pledges ensure the growth of Golden Gate Audubon's critical programs.

Education: With your help, we will continue offering our regular slate of high-quality field trips, classes, and seminars, as well as our popular Speaker Series. In local schools, GGA's award-winning Eco-Education Programs will bring bird and wetland conservation education to more underserved young people and their families in West Oakland and North Richmond. And your support will help us expand Eco-Education to San Francisco in 2011.

Restoration and monitoring: Armies of volunteers working alongside staff will continue to identify and protect the precious pockets of wildland ringing the bay, which serve as havens for resident and migrating birds: Crissy Field and Ocean Beach, Harding Park, Pier 94, Golden Gate Park, Martin Luther King Jr. Regional Shoreline, Cesar Chavez Park, and North Richmond shoreline, among others.

Conservation: We will continue advocating for birds and other wildlife and their habitat on the front lines at the Altamont Pass Wind Resource Area and the proposed Alameda National Wildlife Refuge. Golden Gate Audubon is the leading voice for wildlife representing your interests in these and other critical battles.

The Golden Gate Audubon Birdathon makes it easy for you to take part, whether you are an "emerging" (novice) birder, a birdathon veteran, or someone who is pledging support for a participating birder. You can register and contribute online at www.goldengateaudubon.org or contact Rue Mapp at 510.843.2222. All contributions are tax deductible.

Register today—it takes just a minute. Registration continues through May 1. Then, let your friends, family, and colleagues support you, and join the fun as an individual or as part of a team in Golden Gate Audubon's 2010 Birdathon.

We count because you count!

—Mark Welther, Executive Director



New Development Director

As this issue of the *Gull* went to press, Marsha Mather-Thrift was hired as GGA's new development director. Most recently, she served as director of development and West Coast operations for Friends of the Earth. Marsha's previous positions include associate director for Bluewater Network, development director for San Francisco BayKeeper, and executive director for California Center for Wildlife (now WildCare). We'll tell you more about Marsha in the May *Gull*.

California Native Program Enhances GGA's Eco-Education

Before the first Europeans arrived centuries ago, who inhabited the various areas around the San Francisco Bay that we now call home? How did they use available resources for their survival and well being? Are their descendants still living among us as part of our modern community? How has their way of living changed more than 400 years later?

These are just a few of the important questions asked to the 550 third-, fourth-, and fifth-graders who participate in the California Native Education Program (CNEP), a unique and valued component of Golden Gate Audubon's year-long Eco-Education Program.

In 2001, the CNEP began with a vision: to counter the obvious lack of indigenous perspectives in regional education. While working as a volunteer with Friends of the Alameda Wildlife Refuge, Rebecca Holder had an idea to incorporate Muwekma Ohlone culture and history into the curricula of local elementary schools and invited Corrina Gould, a representative of the Muwekma Ohlone people, to help develop and teach the program. As the program grew, local native youth educator Ras K'dee was recruited in 2006, and today the CNEP is taught in each of the 20-plus classes in the Eco-Oakland and Eco-Richmond Programs. Correlated to state Department of Education standards, Ohlone Culture and



Corrina Gould, Ras K'dee, and Rebecca Holder (left to right) of the California Native Education Program

History is offered to third-graders, and Gold, Greed, and Genocide: Dispelling the Myths of the Gold Rush teaches fourth- and fifth-graders about the environmental and social devastation of the Gold Rush era.

When asked why she participates in the CNEP, Corrina Gould replied, "I think that it is important work, especially for my ancestors. I believe that we are able to bring some balance to the third- and fourth-grade curriculum around the mission system, gold rush era, and the fact that the Ohlone

people are still here. I think our presence also gives students a way to identify with Native people in the present and not just as people of the past, and it gives students a way to explore the closeness to the earth that they or their close relatives or ancestors may have had not that long ago."

Ras K'Dee shared his appreciation for the CNEP. "I support these kinds of programs, because so often in schools, the true history isn't being taught. Especially nowadays,

CNEP continued on page 11

Corrina Gould is an Ohlone woman, born and raised in Oakland. The mother of three, she is the Title VII coordinator, Office of Indian Education at the American Indian Child Resource Center, where she assists in directing an afterschool program that includes wrap-around services for Native students in Oakland. She is also the co-organizer for Indian People Organizing for Change, a small non-profit that works on indigenous people issues as well as sponsoring an annual Shellmound Peace Walk to promote education about and awareness of the desecration of the sacred sites in the greater Bay Area.

Rebecca Holder (Omaha) cofounded CNEP with Amiko Mayeno, then Golden Gate Audubon's education director, to educate students about the original people of the Bay Area and their relationship to the earth. She is the mother of two children and grandmother of two, and directs the Alameda Multicultural Community Center. She serves on the Oakland Public Library's Native American Services Committee and is involved in establishing a community library at Intertribal Friendship House. Rebecca is a gardener with a focus on Native plants. She thanks the Ohlone people for allowing her to live on their land.

Ras K'dee is a Native California (Pomo)/African musician and is a cofounder and the director of a Native youth media organization, Seventh Native American Generation, also known as SNAG, which sponsors workshops and publishes a magazine, among its many other programs. Ras leads workshops weekly with Native youth and cohosts the radio program "BayNativeCircle" on KPFA 94.1-FM in Northern California. He is a renowned lyricist, producer, and lead vocalist and keyboardist for his band Audiopharmacy. He recently returned from Palestine as part of an Indigenous Youth Delegation that he helped organize.



TERNWATCH GEARS UP FOR THE 2010 SEASON

California Least Terns return soon to their nesting site at the Alameda Wildlife Refuge, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) is looking for dedicated volunteers to participate in this year's Ternwatch program.

Although the site is protected by a fence, the terns are vulnerable to many predators, including feral and wild mammals on land, and birds such as hawks, falcons, crows, and gulls. Ternwatch volunteers observe and report such predators, and the very presence of volunteers appears to deter many daytime predators from visiting the colony. The U.S. Navy-owned land is closed to the public, and the program offers a rare opportunity to view the habits of this endangered species up close: courtship, aerial displays, mating, nesting, and feeding chicks and raising them to fledglings.

Volunteers must first attend a two-and-a-half-hour training session. Then, from their personal vehicles, they monitor the tern colony for three-hour periods from a safe distance to spot any incoming predators and to prevent any disturbance to the tern colony. Each volunteer is asked to record predator and Least Tern activities on forms provided by the USFWS.

Volunteers need to attend only one training session prior to monitoring. They should arrive between 5:30 and 6 p.m. All sessions

start promptly at 6 p.m. and go to 8:30 p.m. and are held in Alameda: Thursday, April 29, at the Alameda Free Library (first-floor meeting room), 1550 Oak Street; Tuesday, May 25, at the Alameda USFWS office, 2275 Monarch Street; and Tuesday, June 29, at the Alameda USFWS office, 2275 Monarch Street.

Before they attend a training session, all Ternwatch volunteers must RSVP to Susan Euing of the USFWS at susan_euing@yahoo.com.

MARINE LIFE PROTECTION ACT UPDATE

In August of 2009, the California Fish and Game Commission approved a plan to protect ocean habitats along 153 square miles of coastline between Half Moon Bay and Mendocino County. The plan created 21 marine protected areas and granted full "no take" protection to approximately 86 square miles of the region's most productive coastal waters.

The commission's approval was part of the Marine Life Protection Act Initiative, which directs the state to plan and enact regulations to protect the valuable marine life resources along the coast. The Department of Fish and Game divided approximately 1,100 miles of coastline into five areas and is conducting planning and implementation on a rolling basis. The San Francisco Bay plan is under development and will come

before the commission in 2011.

A diverse coalition of scientists, wildlife watchers, fishermen, conservationists, divers, and surfers worked together over two years to devise the North Central Coast plan. New protections will apply to ecological hotspots such as the Farallon Islands, home to the largest seabird colonies in the continental United States south of Alaska. These protections will benefit many species of fish and birds, including petrels, Tufted Puffins, cormorants, Rhinoceros Auklets, and Common Murres. The plan also includes protections for other important areas, such as the rocky reefs off Bodega Bay, Point Reyes Headlands, and the Montara (formerly called Fitzgerald) tide pools and shale reefs.

Golden Gate Audubon and many other Audubon chapters and Audubon California contributed support to this effort. Through the Marine Life Protection Act, California will soon have the nation's first science-based statewide network of marine protected areas. The new north central marine protected areas went in the water on April 1. They will connect with the existing network of "underwater parks" already in place on the central coast. The process for extending similar protections for the north and south coasts is well under way.

For more information on the ongoing MLPA process, visit www.caloceans.org or www.dfg.ca.gov/mlpa.

Join a Conservation Committee

Meet other birders and wildlife enthusiasts on your side of the bay and find out about projects in your community.

The East Bay Conservation Committee meets the first Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m. at the Golden Gate Audubon office, 2530 San Pablo Avenue, Berkeley. For further information, contact chair Phil Price (pnprice@creekcats.com).

The San Francisco Conservation Committee meets the first Wednesday of the month at 7 p.m. at the Randall Museum, 199 Museum Way (www.randallmuseum.org). For more information, contact chair Noreen Weeden (nweeden@goldengate-audubon.org).

Friends of the Alameda Wildlife Refuge, cochaired by Linda Vallee and Leora Feeney, meets the third Monday of the month. For time and location, contact Leora Feeney (leoraalameda@att.net).

GGA CONSERVATION ONLINE

Golden Gate Audubon now has an online forum where participants can share information about local conservation topics and interact with each other in a timely manner. To sign up with GGAS Conservation, go to www.yahooogroups.com and do a search for GGAS Conservation. Follow the simple instructions to subscribe. You will then receive a welcome message. Once you are a member, you can send a message to all subscribers. This discussion group is a quick and easy way to stay informed and participate in the Golden Gate Audubon conservation community.



SPEAKER SERIES

JENNIFER ROBINSON MADDOX, COORDINATOR

Impressions of the Galapagos

Jack Barclay

Berkeley: Thursday, April 15

7 p.m. refreshments, 7:30 p.m. program

Jack Barclay's presentation, based on a 2009 trip and organized as a daily travel log, will describe how you get around, where you go, and what you see, to convey what it is like to visit this amazing place. Jack will share basic information about island formation and weather and how they affect the islands' biological life. Showing images of many endemic species, he will discuss the impressions one gets when visiting the islands: the extraordinary tameness of the wildlife and the less conspicuous but prevalent effects of how competition for resources has led to specialization and speciation. For example, the world's only nocturnal gull lives on the islands. Other, less comforting impressions are the pervasive impact of introduced exotic organisms, including humans, on the ecology of the Galápagos.

Jack Barclay, cofounder of Albion Environmental, is a senior wildlife biologist who specializes in the biology and conservation of Burrowing Owls; the inventory and impact assessment of special-status wildlife species as defined by the California Environmental Quality Act and the Endangered Species Act; and mitigation planning for special-status resources. Prior to his work in California, he spent 11 years at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology as coordinator of the Peregrine Falcon reintroduction program for the eastern United States. He has published many articles on, and contributed chapters to books on, raptor biology and conservation. He gave a Speaker Series presentation on Burrowing Owls in 2008 and continues to advise GGA's Burrowing Owl program at Cesar Chavez Park in Berkeley.



Blue-footed Booby on the Galapagos Islands

Berkeley Speaker Series: Northbrae Community Church, 941 The Alameda (between Solano and Marin).
Directions: www.northbrae.org/directions.htm.

New Volunteer for Speaker Series Program

Golden Gate Audubon welcomes Susan Consey to the Speaker Series program as the refreshments coordinator in Berkeley. She has a long involvement with Golden Gate Audubon. In addition to participating in many field trips and classes, she has taken a hands-on role by helping us set up for events and by driving fellow birders to field trips. Susan enjoys Golden Gate Audubon's many activities. "Being office bound all week," she says, "it is a real joy to be reminded of the beauty and importance of the natural world." In her professional life, Susan is vice president, financial advisor, and certified financial planner at Morgan Stanley in Oakland. Through her work at Morgan Stanley, she has been able to use her volunteer hours to provide matching funds for Golden Gate Audubon's Eco-Education programs. After her debut at the February Speaker Series, we look forward to tasting more of her delectable homemade treats at future events.



Volunteer Appreciation Party – You're Invited!

To recognize the tremendous efforts of our dedicated volunteers, Golden Gate Audubon will hold our annual Volunteer Thank-You Party on Saturday, May 22, 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., at Marina Bay Park in Richmond. We will gather near the Rosie the Riveter Memorial for a spring picnic.

Whether you have volunteered for a one-time project or have led field trips for a decade or more, we invite you to join us for this free event—our way of thanking our volunteer corps of more than 1,000 people. We hope to see volunteers and their guests from all around the bay for good food and good company, as well as for bird walks to nearby Meeker Slough, volunteer awards and prizes, and activities for all members of the family.

We are not mailing paper invitations, so please accept this as your invitation to attend the party. Email invitations will be sent out, so make sure we have your correct address.

We encourage carpooling, but if you drive, you'll find plenty of parking adjacent to the picnic area. From I-580 north to the Richmond–San Rafael Bridge, take the Marina Bay Parkway/South 23rd Street exit. Turn south (toward the bay) on Marina Bay Parkway, go over the freeway, and proceed to Regatta Boulevard. Turn right onto Regatta, then left at the first stop sign. Marina Bay Park is at the corner of Regatta and Marina Bay Parkway. We will provide shuttle service from Richmond BART.

Please RSVP by May 10. In your RSVP, let us know if you need a ride or shuttle service or have food allergies. Contact Jennifer Robinson Maddox at jrobinson@goldengateaudubon.org or 510.843.9374.



FIELD TRIPS

PAM BELCHAMBER, COORDINATOR

\$ Entrance fee

Biking trip

For questions about individual field trips, contact the leaders. If you cannot reach a leader, contact Pam Belchamber at 510.549.2839. Field trips are also listed on the Golden Gate Audubon website at www.goldengateaudubon.org.

Jewel Lake

Golden Gate Park

Friday, April 2, 8:30 – 10:30 a.m.

Phila Rogers, 510.848.9156,

philajane6@yahoo.com

We continue our monthly first Friday trips at Tilden Park. Meet at the parking lot at the north end of Central Park Dr. for a 1-mile, 2-hour-plus stroll through this lush riparian area. In early April, the spring breeding birds are returning, and many will be singing. We'll look for Black-headed Grosbeaks, Wilson's Warblers, and Warbling Vireos, among others.

San Francisco Botanical Garden

Golden Gate Park

Sunday, April 4, 8 – 10:30 a.m.

Alan Ridley, allanrid@pacbell.net; Helen

McKenna, 415.566.3241; Ginny Marshall;

Dominik Mosur, polkskatata@yahoo.com

Meet at the front gate of the garden in Golden Gate Park, 9th Ave. at Lincoln Way. This delightful section of the park has several micro-habitats that attract an array of resident, migrant, and vagrant birds. This monthly trip is oriented toward helping beginning birders develop their skills in spotting and identifying birds.

Biking Big Break and Marsh Creek Regional Trails

East Contra Costa County

Saturday, April 10

Kathy and Blair Jarrett, 510.547.1233,

kathy_jarrett@yahoo.com

Meet at Fetzner Ln. and Jordan Ln. in Oakley. Each year, nearly half of the waterfowl and shorebirds migrating along the Pacific Flyway pass through the Sacramento Delta. A paved trail with views of freshwater marsh is an excellent place to see many species. Bring lunch and liquids. Dress in layers. Bicycle helmet required. Rain cancels. If you have room in your vehicle for an extra bicycle or if you need a ride, contact the leaders at the earliest opportunity. Reservations are not necessary, but an email or phone call is appreciated. The leaders will not take public transit on this trip.

Take Hwy. 24 east toward Walnut Creek, then I-680 north to Hwy. 242 north. From Hwy. 242, take Hwy. 4 east toward Stockton/Pittsburg. Stay to the right and follow the lanes signed for Rio Vista/Oakley/Hwy. 160; do not follow the Brentwood Bypass. Take the first exit, Hwy. 4/Main St. in Oakley; do not continue on Hwy. 160 to the Antioch Bridge. Go 1.1 mile and turn left at Big Break Rd. Go .2 mile and turn right on Vintage Pkwy. Go .8 mile and turn left onto Walnut Meadows Dr. After .5 mile, turn left onto Jordan Ln., which ends at Fetzner Ln. and entrance to the trail. Parking is on the street. For a map of the area, go to www.ebparks.org/parks/big_break.

Alcatraz Island

Monday, April 12: Allan Ridley,

allanrid@pacbell.net

Wednesday, May 12: Bob Lewis,

bob@wingbeats.org

Wednesday, June 9: Eddie Bartley,

eddie@naturetrip.com

8:45 a.m. – 11 a.m.

This trip, scheduled monthly through the spring, is offered exclusively to Golden



Clark's Grebe.

Charles Denson

Gate Audubon Supporting Members and is limited to 10 participants. Expect to see numerous breeding birds: Western and California Gulls, Brandt's and Pelagic Cormorants, Pigeon Guillemots, Snowy Egrets, Black-crowned Night-Herons, and Black Oystercatchers.

Reserve your spot by contacting Stephanie Strait, GGA Office Manager, ggas@goldengateaudubon.org or 510.843.2222. Once you have received trip confirmation, book space on the ferry with Alcatraz Cruises at 415.981.7625 or www.alcatrazcruises.com. Buy a ticket (\$26) for the 9 a.m. Early Bird Tour. Tickets sell out several days in advance, so reserve as soon as possible. The ferry departs from Pier 33 in San Francisco, near the corner of Bay St. and Embarcadero. Each walk is about 1.5 hours.

Corona Heights

San Francisco

Friday, April 16, 8 a.m. – 10 a.m.

Charles Hibbard; Brian Fitch; Dominik

Mosur, polkskatata@yahoo.com

Meet in front of the Randall Museum, 199 Museum Way, at the end of Museum Way off Roosevelt. We will enjoy views of the city and bay as we circle Corona Heights,

FIELD TRIPS continued on page 10

Come Out and Meet GGA's Birding the Bay Trail Docents

Docents with our Birding the Bay Trail program are stationed along the San Francisco Bay Trail in the East Bay from the Albany mudflats to the Richmond Marina. The teams of volunteers are equipped with scopes to show trail users the abundant birdlife and are eager to share other information about the area, from the local plants to the local history. To see when our knowledgeable docents will be on the trail, please check our online calendar at www.goldengateaudubon.org/calendar.

Birdathon Field Trips

These field trips have been organized specifically to help you reach your goal for the Golden Gate Audubon's 2010 Birdathon. You can also participate through any of our regularly scheduled field trips during the month of the Birdathon to accumulate species and make a pledge, whether an amount per species observed or a creative contribution (such as \$50 per endangered species). For more suggestions on how to raise Birdathon pledges or participate in the Birdathon contest, see page 1 or go to www.goldengateaudubon.org.

Birding in Alameda

Sunday, April 18, 8:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Chris Bard, 510.522.5699,
chrisbard@earthlink.net

Let's see how many species we can find on the island of Alameda and in the Bay Farm area so you can add them to your total species list for the Birdathon and make your pledge. We'll meet near South Shore Beach and carpool to various locations. Please bring a scope if you have one. Heavy rain cancels trip.

Drive to the south end of Park St. in Alameda. Turn right on Shoreline Dr. and turn right immediately on the next street toward shopping center. Meet on the left in the parking area across the street from the car wash.

San Mateo Coast

Sunday, April 18, 8:30 a.m. – 3 p.m.
Alan Hopkins, alanhopkins@att.net,
415.664.0983

Meet at in the parking lot at San Gregorio State Beach (10.5 miles south of Half Moon Bay near the intersection of Hwy. 1 and Hwy. 84). This part of the coast provides great avian diversity within a small area. We'll look for shorebirds and waterfowl at Pesacadero Marsh, seabirds at Pigeon Point, and land birds along Gazos Creek Rd. Bring lunch, snacks, and liquids. State park fee is \$8. Are you working on a big list for the Birdathon? Contact the leader for an extra-credit pretrip extension.

Murphy's MOB

**Saturday, April 24,
7:30 a.m. until we drop**
Dan and Joan Murphy

It's been about 18 years since Murphy's MOB (Many Observers) last

gathered for a day of birding in San Francisco and the Peninsula. Golden Gate Audubon is hosting a Birdathon, and as in the past, we'll be part of it. This all-day outing is designed to see as many species as possible. We will meet at 7:30 a.m. at Chain of Lakes Dr. and Kennedy Dr. in western Golden Gate Park. From there, we will drive to different birding spots in San Francisco and on the peninsula, perhaps as far as Palo Alto (carpooling is encouraged).

This trip is timed to catch the end of shorebird migration. We should miss some ducks and gulls, but we should pick up many migrating land birds. We expect to see about 100 species. The suggested minimum pledge for individuals or families for this trip is 50 cents per bird. You can add to that by signing up family, friends, and colleagues to increase your pledge.

The Murphy's MOB trip is limited to 30 participants, and you must sign up in advance. Register by email at murphsf@comcast.net or by calling 415.564.0074. The meeting place may change because of public events that restrict access, so we do want to be able to get in touch at the last minute. More details will be sent to participants in April.

Bob's Birders

Bob Lewis will lead a series of birding trips over a 48-hour Birdathon period, on Tuesday and Wednesday, May 4 and 5. All trips will be in Alameda County and will explore the springtime bounties of our East Bay regional parks. Each will be about three hours long. The trips focus on seeing as many birds as possible during the period, to enable you to build your own lists for your Birdathon contributors. Participants will be expected to make a contribution



of \$50 for each trip and \$25 for the following trip to the Birdathon contest at Bob's Birders. For maps and directions to the parks, along with other information, go to www.etiparks.org/parks.

**May 4, Coyote Hills Regional Park,
8 – 11 a.m.**

We'll look for herons, raptors, swallows, warblers, and all the other good birds always present at this special park.

May 4, Garin Regional Park, 1 – 4 p.m.
Our targets are orioles, bluebirds, woodpeckers, and other dry country birds.

**May 4, Redwood Regional Park,
7:30 – 10:30 p.m.**
After we meet at the Redwood Road entrance, we'll look and listen for owls. This trip is limited to 20, and a \$25 contribution is expected. To sign up, contact Rue Mapp at rmapp@goldengateaudubon.org.

May 5, Martin Luther King Jr. Regional Shoreline, 6 – 9 a.m.
We'll meet at the end of Edgewater and cover the adjacent areas of the shoreline, including Arrowhead Marsh on an ebbing tide. We'll look for lingering shorebirds (in breeding plumage), rails, gulls, and terns.

**May 5, Hayward Regional Shoreline,
4 – 7 p.m.**
Meeting place is the end of West Winton. Our targets are lingering shorebirds, cormorants, raptors, terns, and other birds as the tide rises.



CLASSES

ALBANY ADULT SCHOOL

The following classes are held in the East Bay. Class fees are noted on the school's website: www.albanyadultschool.org.

Birding by Ear

Dennis Wright, blkittiwake@yahoo.com

Session I: Four Thursdays, April 1 – 29, 7 – 8:30 p.m. (no class on April 8), plus four Saturday field trips, April 3 – May 1, 8:30 – 11:30 a.m. (no field trip on April 10)

Session II: Four Thursdays, May 6 – 27, 7 – 8:30 p.m., plus four Saturday field trips, May 8 – 29, 8:30 – 11:30 a.m.

With two sessions offered this spring, you can inundate yourself with birdsongs! Birds are in full song, and it's the perfect time to learn our local spring songsters. We will listen to birdsongs in class and, on field trips, visit various habitats to get a full range of the types of songs we hear in the Bay Area. Go to the instructor's website (www.blkittiwake.com) for field trip locations.

Beginning Bird-watching

Anne Huff, Arne2210b@sbcglobal.net

Four Tuesdays, May 4, 11, and 18 and June 1, 7 – 8:30 p.m., plus four 2.5-hour field trips on May 8, 15, and 29 and June 5. Spring is a wonderful time to start learning birds, with returning nesters in their bright courting colors and lots of birdsong to draw your attention. This introduction to birding covers identification, habitats, and use of equipment. You'll learn how to recognize the more common birds of the Bay Area and where to find them. The four field trips will be detailed in class.

Monterey Birding Weekend

Bob Lewis, Bob@wingbeats.org, Rusty Sault, RSault@sonic.net

Wednesday, April 28, 7 – 8:30 p.m., plus a weekend field trip, Saturday, May 1, 9 a.m., to Sunday, May 2, about 3 p.m.

Join Bob and Rusty for an exciting weekend in the Monterey area to see Snowy Plover, shorebirds, seabirds, and a variety of spring passerines. We will visit Elkhorn Slough and nearby birding sites, stay overnight in Monterey, and then enjoy Point Lobos and the Monterey waterfront. Participants arrange and pay for their own lodging and meals. For details, go to www.wingbeats.org.

SUMMER IN THE SIERRA

The Sierra in late spring is a wonderful place for birds. The meadows are alive with Wilson's Snipe, Yellow-headed Blackbirds, and Wilson's Phalaropes, and the mountains are buzzing with nesting woodpeckers (Black-backed, White-headed, and Hairy, and Williamson's and Red-breasted Sapsuckers), Mountain Chickadees, Cassin's Finches, warblers, and flycatchers (Dusky, Hammond's, Gray, and Olive-sided). The calls of bittern, snipe, and Sandhill Cranes carry through the night.

Golden Gate Audubon offers two classes, each limited to 35 participants. The classes are popular, so plan ahead! All activities take place in the Sierra. The initial meeting place for both classes is the Yuba Pass parking lot on Highway 49 between Sierraville and Bassetts. Additional details will be provided upon registration. For old hands at this class, the Sierra Valley Lodge has changed hands, and room availability there is uncertain (information will be updated on the GGA website). Participants are responsible for their own lodging reservations. Suggestions include Golden West Saloon Restaurant and Motel, Loyalton, 530.993.4467; Canyon Ranch Resort, Sierraville, 530.994.1033; Sierra Hot Springs Resort and Retreat, Sierraville, 530.994.3773; and Sierraville Motel and RV Park, Highway 89, 530.994.3751.

To register for these classes, contact Stephanie Strait, GGA Office Manager, ggas@goldengateaudubon.org or 510.843.2222.

Birds of the Sierra I

Bob Lewis, Bob@wingbeats.org, Rusty Sault, RSault@sonic.net

Thursday, June 10, 3 p.m., to Sunday, June 13, noon

Fee: \$99 for GGA members, \$109 for nonmembers, including one unforgettable dinner at San Francisco State's campus in Bassetts on June 11.

Birds of the Sierra II

Bob Lewis, Bob@wingbeats.org, Eddie Bartley, Eddie@naturetrip.com

Thursday, June 17, 3 p.m., to Sunday, June 20, noon

Fee: \$85 for GGA members, \$95 for nonmembers (no meals included).



Black Turnstones

Bob Lewis/www.wingbeats.org



Birding hit its midwinter lull in February, perhaps dampened by the welcome rain. Reports focused mostly on continuing overwintering specialties, with a few new surprises mixed in.

LOONS TO DUCKS

As many as 4 White-faced Ibis have been overwintering in the S. Bay (SCL), mostly around Palo Alto Baylands and Mountain View Forebay, where they continued through the 25th (mob). Tufted Ducks continued to offer great views at Chilton Court Forebay, CC, through the 7th and at L. Merritt in Oakland, ALA, all month (mob). San Leandro Marina, ALA, remains the best bayside location to find White-winged Scoters, with 3 present Feb. 13 (JC, DHe). A female Long-tailed Duck made the Feb. 18 duck count at Richardson Bay, MRN (KW, LB, RW, DMK).

RAPTORS TO ALCIDS

A Feb. 10 bird survey of Tolay Park, SON, produced a Rough-legged Hawk (PC). Prairie Falcons were on the prowl at Rush Ranch, SOL, on the 7th (RR) and at Crane Cr. RP, SON, on the 28th (HK, BDo). Early morning visits to Coyote Hills RP, ALA, were rewarded with 2 calling Black Rails Feb. 25–26 (KS; RC, JR). On the 20th, a waterthrush hunter at Berkeley Aquatic Park, ALA, instead found a Ruff associating with a yellowlegs on a mudflat (ZB). Starting Feb. 13, Glaucous Gulls were reported from Salt Pond #16, SCL (MSi; BB, BR); Denniston Cr. in Pillar Pt. Harbor, SM (DS); and Linda Mar Beach in Pacifica, SM (DS).

DOVES TO THRASHERS

On the 7th, a pair of Short-eared Owls hunted Huichica Cr., NAP (DeH, DaD). A 3rd owl turned up at Belmont Slough in Redwood Shores, SM, on the 13th (TG). Best sighting from a Feb. 3 visit to Los Vaqueros Res., CC, was a Lewis's Woodpecker (MSh, AMD). Two Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers lingered in the region: at Arbor and Cr. in Menlo Park, SM, through the 10th (KC), and at Edsel and Craig Dr. in



Mountain Bluebirds at Brushy Peak Regional Preserve

San Jose, SCL, through the 18th (BR). Red-naped Sapsuckers were reported on the 7th at Marina Lagoon in Foster City, SM (AO), and at Pescadero, SM, on the 14th (GH).

A Hammond's Flycatcher was located on the 6th at Garin RP in Hayward, ALA (DW). A Mountain Bluebird was located Feb. 7 in Byron, CC (ADM). A week later, a flock of 15 decorated a fence line at Brushy Peak RP, ALA (BM). A Townsend's Solitaire retreated to Bart's Retreat on Mt. Tamalpais, MRN, through the 4th (DMK, RW; JL, LS).

WOOD WARBLERS TO FINCHES

A Nashville Warbler recreated at Potrero

Recreation Center, SL, on the 27th (KL). A Palm Warbler kept company with a Black-throated Gray Warbler at Heritage Square in Emeryville, ALA, through the 25th (mob). Three more Black-throated Grays were reported in CC, SM, and SL. Overwintering Northern Waterthrushes were reported from their regular haunts Charleston Rd. Marsh, SCL (mob), and at Berkeley Aquatic Park, ALA (BDu, NA).

A male Rose-breasted Grosbeak was refound Feb. 7–8 at Strybing Arboretum in GGP, SE, where it has been present since December (DM, GM, BL, mob). An Indigo Bunting was photographed at a San Bruno feeder, SM, on the 13th (AP, LB).

Semicolons separate original observers from subsequent observers. Abbreviations, most in many cases, refer to the observers. Information is compiled from BirdBox transcripts and regional listservs; the latter trapping pests from every bird sighting. Special thanks to Rod Thornton for helping compile Observations data.

Abbreviations for Observers: ADM: A. DeMartin; AG: Andie Geller; AMD: Amy McDonald; AC: Andrew Clark; AF: Ann Farver; BB: Bill Brusman; BDo: Bill Doyle; BDu: Bob Dunn; BF: Brian Fitch; BM: Bruce Mast; BR: Bob Reinga; DHe: David Hamilton; DeH: Denise Hamilton; DHe: Derek Heins; DM: Dominik Musur; DMK: Dave McKenzie; DS: Dan Singer; DW: Debbie Wing; EB: Eddie Baiter; GH: Garth Harwood; GM: Ginny Marshall; GT: Glen Tepke; HBH: Hugh B. Harvey; HK: Helen K. Kunderter; HF: Harry Fowers; JC: Jim Chirofilos; JL: John Luther; JR: Jim Ross; JS: Jordan Swank; KC: Karen Corbett; KH: Keith Hansen; KL: Kevin Libera; KS: Ken Schneider; KW: Kerry Wilcox; LB: Len Blumin; LS: Lang Stevenson; MSh: Mary Shea; MS: Marty Sidor; NA: Nash Arthur; PC: Peter Colasanti; PM: Peter Metropoulos; RC: Richard Cimino; RF: Ruthie Rudes; RW: Jim White; TG: Tom Gudder; ZB: Zeph Eder.

Abbreviations for Counties and Others: ALA: Alameda; CC: Contra Costa; CP: County Park; Cr: Creek; Cyn: Canyon; EEC: Environmental Education Center; GGP: Golden Gate Park; L: Lake; MRN: Marin; Mt: Mount; N: North; NAP: Napa; NWR: National Wildlife Refuge; OSP: Open Space Preserve; PRNS: Pt. Reyes National Seashore; Pt: Point; Rd: Road; Res: Reserve; RP: Regional Park/Preserve; RS: Regional Shoreline; S: South; SB: State Beach; SCL: Santa Clara; SF: San Francisco; SM: San Mateo; SOL: Solano; SON: Sonoma; SP: State Park; SR: State Reserve.

FIELD TRIPS continued from page 6

checking the east canyon woodland and the north forest for residents and migrants, as well as monitoring the hilltop scrub and south cliff.

Mines Road

WATKINS CANYON

Saturday, April 24

Dave Quady, 510.704.9353,
davequady@att.net.

This trip begins in Livermore at 8 a.m. and concludes there in the early evening, with opportunities to end earlier if you wish. We can expect to see Lewis's Woodpecker, Phainopepla, Bullock's Oriole, Ash-throated Flycatcher, Western Kingbird, and Yellow-billed Magpie in this habitat. Wild Turkey, Greater Roadrunner, and Golden Eagle are among other possibilities. The trip is limited to 20 participants; contact the leader to sign up. Carpooling is encouraged to and from Livermore, and is essential during the day because of the limited parking along our route. The leader will provide directions and carpooling information to those confirmed on the trip. Bring food and liquids.

Sibley Volcanic Regional Preserve

Sunday, April 25, 8 a.m. – noon

Rusty Scalf, rscalf@sonic.net

Join Rusty Scalf for a morning of birding in the Sibley Volcanic Regional Preserve. Meet Rusty at in the parking lot located at the preserve entrance.

From Hwy. 24 take Fish Ranch Rd. immediately east of the Caldecott Tunnel. Continue .8 mile to Grizzly Peak Blvd. Turn left and go 2.4 miles on Grizzly Peak to Skyline Blvd. Turn left and drive .1 mile to the preserve entrance on the left. For maps and additional details, go to www.ebparks.org/parks/sibley.

Lake Merritt and Lakeside Park

Oakland, Alameda County

Wednesday, April 28, 9:30 a.m. – noon

Hilary Powers, 510.834.1066,
hilary@powersedit.com; Ruth Tobey,
510.528.2093, ruthtobey@earthlink.net

We will meet at the large spherical cage near the Nature Center at Perkins and Bellevue. We will bird around there, then go up the garden path toward Children's Fairyland or walk down the lake toward Embarcadero, after which we will cover what we missed. Now, at the beginning

Special Thanks to a Member and Volunteer

Volunteer Roberta Guise is a longtime birder and Golden Gate Audubon member with her own marketing and public relations firm, Guise Marketing Inc. (www.guise-marketing.com). A year ago, Roberta adopted Golden Gate Audubon as a pro bono client, and she is now a consultant to our Communications Committee. Roberta is helping to create Golden Gate Audubon's communications plan, which will enable us to increase our media visibility and reach more potential members. Thank you, Roberta, for your generosity and for sharing your expertise.

of spring at Lake Merritt, come see all our regular visitors and, with luck, a few surprises, too.

Take the 12, N, or NL bus to Grand and Perkins, and walk into the park on Perkins. The best parking is at the boathouse lot near the spherical cage. Entry (via Bellevue near Children's Fairyland) is free on weekdays.

Donations

Thank you for your generous donations to support our many conservation, education, and member activities!

PERFUMINE FAULTON (\$500 to \$999)

Gary and Chris Bard, Carol Baxter, Leanne Hinton and Gary Scott, Bob and Pam Howard, Mary E. Martin, Lee Rudin

LEAFY TEAM (\$200 to \$499)

Barbara Anderson, Mary C. Betlach, Caroline Booth, Judy Breen, Lo-Yi and Millie Chan, Terry and Zeo Coddington, Jason Crotty, Jane and John Dang, Steven M. and Marjorie Garner, Patricia Greene, Lois Hayn, Rebecca R. and Lee G. Jackrel, Sandra M. La Framboise, Michael J. Marken, Jane Maxwell, Edward F. Walsh Jr.

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when scheduling classes with teachers, you'll find it really difficult because they are always preparing for testing. The students have to perform well or the school's budget will be cut, and in some cases the teachers may be let go. If their education wasn't based on how well they're testing, they would have more time to learn about California Native history and other important environmental topics, or have more arts and media education. Programs like the CNEP supplement for the schools' failure to provide a well-rounded education."

As for the future of the CNEP, Corrina Gould said, "I think it would be great if we could work with the school districts to formally adopt our curriculum and to work on

enlarging the work that we do in order to get it as part of the curriculum statewide. Her ambitions for the program, however, have some long standing obstacles. According to the U.S. District Court, "despite its steadfast efforts, the Muwekma Ohlone Tribe has been unable to obtain federal recognition, a status vital to the Tribe and its members."

The California Native Education Program will continue to reach more Bay Area students and school district representatives as Golden Gate Audubon expands its Eco-Education Programs to San Francisco next year. With an increased awareness of the traditional values of the Muwekma Ohlone and other Native tribes and a factual account of California history, our

Eco-Education Program participants will become more informed and empowered stewards of our precious home here in the San Francisco Bay.

—Anthony DeCicco,
Eco Education Program Manager

GGA Staff Member Joins Audubon Canyon Ranch Board

Golden Gate Audubon's Chief Operating Officer Kevin Corsey has been elected to the Audubon Canyon Ranch board of directors. As one of the founders of ACR, Golden Gate Audubon holds two seats on the ACR board. Longtime volunteer Dan Murphy holds the other seat.

Volunteer Opportunities and Events

Saturday, April 3 9 a.m. – noon

Pier 94 wetlands restoration workday. As part of our ongoing efforts to restore wetlands along San Francisco's southern waterfront, we will continue weeding the wetland and working on the new upland plots. Join us and see what birds have come back to the wetland. Refreshments provided.

Earth Day

The global observance of Earth Day is held each year on April 22. There are many ways to celebrate or volunteer your time for the environment around the Bay Area this Earth Day. With the help of our members and volunteers, we are gradually changing the landscape and creating valuable habitat for birds and other wildlife. Golden Gate Audubon will lead or cosponsor the following workdays around Earth Day. Check out our volunteer webpage for more information on other events.

Golden Gate Audubon will take part in the Oakland Public Works Earth Expo with interactive bird games for all ages. The expo is held at the Frank H. Ogawa Plaza in front of Oakland City Hall.

White-crowned Sparrow habitat restoration. Participate in restoring habitat along Golden Gate Park's bison paddock by planting natives, weeding established sites, and nurturing the area for local White-crowned Sparrows. Closed-toed shoes recommended. If you are part of a group of five or more, please RSVP to kimberly.kiefer@sfgov.org.

Wetland habitat restoration at the MLK Jr. Shoreline in Oakland. We will continue our work around Arrowhead Marsh and Elmhurst Creek. Join us for weeding—and for watching

the foraging and diving waterfowl and shorebirds. Refreshments provided.

Earth Stroll at the San Francisco Presidio. Enjoy a fun, interactive adventure and make strides to improve the health of the planet and your own health, too, at the many activity stations around East Beach and Crissy Field. You can play eco-games, visit with live animals, and engage in activities designed to help you connect with our local corner of the planet. Families are welcome.

TogetherGreen Volunteer Days. Join us for monthly workdays at Harding Park. We will continue to weed out the radish along the native coastal scrub. Refreshments provided.

Monitoring Volunteers

We are recruiting Golden Gate Audubon volunteers to work with the Golden Gate National Recreation Area and National Park Service in monitoring the local Bank Swallow colony at Fort Funston, San Francisco. Last year's nests eroded during the heavy winter storms. Monitoring will start in April and run through July. Bank Swallows are listed by the state as a threatened species.

Field Trip Leaders

We are always looking for new field trip leaders to take Golden Gate Audubon members and volunteers to locations around the San Francisco Bay Area. If you have a great birding spot that you are willing to share with others, let us know.

For updates on these workdays and for directions, visit www.goldengateaudubon.org/volunteer. Questions? Please contact Jennifer Robinson Maddox, Golden Gate Audubon Volunteer Coordinator, at jrobinson@goldengateaudubon.org.

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HELP BIRDS continued from page 1

The EPA urges everyone to conduct an "energy audit" to assess where energy conservation could be achieved at home—such as unplugging appliances that are not in use, making sure weather sealing and insulation are in good working order, and using water efficiently.

You can also reduce your energy footprint by reusing, recycling, or composting appropriate materials and reducing household waste. Energy conservation measures can save you money—as much as \$30 over the life of a fluorescent bulb—and significantly contribute to reducing our reliance on fossil fuels.

STEP 2. HELP PROVIDE HABITAT FOR BIRDS IN YOUR YARD

One of the most significant contributors to the decline of many bird populations is the lack of habitat for foraging, nesting, and roosting. The North American Bird Conservation Initiative urges everyone to grow diverse, wildlife-friendly plants in their yards, reduce their reliance on pesticides and fertilizers, and provide a safe haven for wildlife. It is also important to leave trees and old branches ("snags" often used by cavity nesters) whenever possible and avoid cutting during the breeding season, from March 1 to August 30.

Local nurseries offer a wide range of native plants that will provide food and

cover for birds and other wildlife, and Golden Gate Audubon now can provide a "Backyard Habitat Audit" to help you plan a "greener" yard. You don't need a big yard (or even a yard at all) to make the area around your home safer for birds and other wildlife. Some native plants can be grown in small planters and provide food for birds and insects. A well-designed yard can also use less water, which reduces waste, pollution, and greenhouse gas emissions.

STEP 3: KEEP YOUR CAT INDOORS

Golden Gate Audubon and the San Francisco SPCA, as well as the National Audubon Society and the National Humane Society, urge all cat owners to keep their cats indoors. Cats kill tens of millions of birds each year, putting an immense strain on some populations. Moreover, cats that are kept indoors live longer, healthier lives and are less expensive for owners. By reducing predation on birds, we can build more robust bird populations that will be more resilient to the negative impacts of climate change.

STEP 4 SHOP LOCAL, BUY GREEN

Today, most people purchase foods that are transported long distances to their local grocer. From other states and even other countries. All that transportation requires immense use of fuels and other carbon-emitting activities that contribute to pollution, waste, and greenhouse gas emissions.

You can reduce the "footprint" in your grocery cart by buying locally produced foods, especially meats, dairy products, vegetables, and fruits. We're fortunate in the Bay Area to have many local "farm box" organizations and co-ops and grocery stores that offer foods produced locally or at least within California. Buying local not only helps the environment, but also boosts the local and state economy. Some products, such as shade-grown coffee, may come from far away, but are at least grown in ways that reduce impacts to birds.

STEP 5: REDUCE BIRD STRIKES AT HOME AND AT WORK

Hundreds of millions of birds die each year as a result of collisions with windows, cars, communication towers, and wind turbines. At home, you can help prevent window strikes by placing decals on your windows or closing curtains or blinds. At work, consider asking your employer or building manager to make windows more bird friendly and to turn off lights (especially in tall buildings) at night during the spring and fall migration. Turning off lights will conserve energy, save money, and help reduce bird collisions. Golden Gate Audubon's Lights Out for Birds program provides information and guidance for building owners and operators who are interested in reducing energy costs and helping birds.

—Mike Lynes, Conservation Director